1: Ray E-5 (1928-38) 1939 Plateau

The specific sanction is unknown even to the Plains-like Kutenai or Flathead. But the generalization concerning invoked guardians does not hold for a great part of the Plateau. Specific and necessary invocation is practiced by the Tenino, Umatilla, Coeur d'Alêne, Flathead; the Kutenai, Sanpoil, Southern Okanogan (see above); and the Shuswap. Among the Carrier the spirit reappears throughout life in dreams. In the other groups the spirit is recalled in a formalized manner, often by singing. Among the Lillooet, Thompson, and Chilcotin the notion seems to be more that of continuing talents. The latter have undoubtedly been influenced by the Coast. Four distinct patterns emerge: sanctions, limited to the Plains; inherent power, typical of the Coast and penetrating to the Klamath; volitional dreams, perhaps typical of the Mackenzie Basin; and invocation of ever-present spirits, unquestionably typical of the Plateau.

A related matter demands consideration. The Plateau notion is not that spirits cannot be identified with man or enter man's body; but rather that such identification or intrusion is unusual, the common condition being that of separate existences. Intrusion during the vision appears unique to the Kutenai, though the hypnotism or unconsciousness accompanying visions of the Tenino, Klikitat, and Umatilla may be the result of intrusion or possession. More probably, however, it is the strength of the power that causes the reaction. These groups, far removed from the Kutenai, are contiguous and open to influences from the Coast where violent reactions are thus interpreted.

Intrusion of another's spirit is recognized as a definite cause of disease by the Tenino, Wishram, Klikitat, Umatilla, Kittitas, Wenatchi, Sanpoil, Kalispel, Coeur d'Alêne, Flathead, and Lower Thompson. To the north of the Thompson the spirit is the agent causing the intrusion of an object. This is exactly the Klamath notion. The intrusive spirit, then, uniformly characterizes the central and southern Plateau, except the Klamath. It may be considered typical of the Plateau, though not exclusive to it. The Chinook share the concept, possibly borrowed from the Klikitat or Wishram, but it is not known among the Quinault, the Tillamook, or coastal tribes to the south.[18]

A further type of spirit intrusion or possession is that occurring upon the return of the spirit at maturity after an absence following

[18] Spier and Sapir, *Wishram Ethnography*, p. 244; Spier, *Klamath Ethnography*, p. 122; Olson, *Quinault Indians*, pp. 141 ff.; Barnett, *Oregon Coast*, pp. 188–91.

1: Ray E-5 (1928-38) 1939 Plateau

Shamanistic specialization of function may be divided into three categories. First, specific powers spiritually bestowed; that is, the guardian spirit of the shaman may specifically present him with the ability to cure certain types of disease with especial ease and certainty. This form of specialization is found among a block of peoples on the western border of the American Plateau (Southern Okanogan, Wenatchi, Kittitas, Klikitat, Tenino).[52] In all of these cases, except possibly the Tenino, specialization is supplementary to general practice. Again on the eastern border bestowed specialities appear (Kalispel, Flathead). The second type is specialization by reputation: this is the result of consistent success by a shaman in the treatment of a particular type of disease. It has nothing to do with a practitioner's spirit power as such; it is concerned with actual experience, a pragmatic concept. It is found throughout the Canadian Plateau, including the Chilcotin and Carrier, and minimally among the Sanpoil. The third category is specialization according to strength. Some types of ailment are more difficult to cure than others; stronger doctors are naturally required if success is to be achieved. These stronger shamans are the ones with many guardian spirits, or spirits with intrinsically superior power. Consequently, particular shamans are consistently called for ailments of the more serious type. This specialization according to shaman's strength is found more or less in all groups but especially among the Coeur d'Alêne, Shuswap, and Carrier. The Klamath, Wishram, and Umatilla do not recognize any type of specialization except the last.[53] The distributions in this case do not align as usual. Bestowed specialization quite probably links with the Coast on the west, but the eastern cases are uncertain. The Canadian unit stands out, but the American area is divided. Yet the wholly negative groups in the south are fairly continuous.

CONCEPTS OF DISEASE

Plateau concepts of disease causation fall into clear-cut categories. The most common of these emphasizes the familiar idea of intrusion: a foreign element somehow gains entrance into the body and its presence causes illness. This general concept must be subdivided: the intrusive element may be a material object, such as a fragment of stone, a hair, a bit of bone, or an insect; or, in marked contrast, it may be another's

[52] Cline, *Southern Okanagon*, pp. 162 ff.; Park, *Shamanism*, p. 100.

[53] Spier, *Klamath Ethnography*, pp. 108, 123; Spier and Sapir, *Wishram Ethnography*, pp. 244 ff.

1: Ray E-5 (1928-38) 1939 Plateau

753 guardian spirit that gains entrance. The latter case may be termed "intrusion of a foreign spirit" but it must be remembered that the spirit involved is invariably a guardian spirit; no spirits outside this category are given attention in the Plateau. Furthermore, the spirit is invariably

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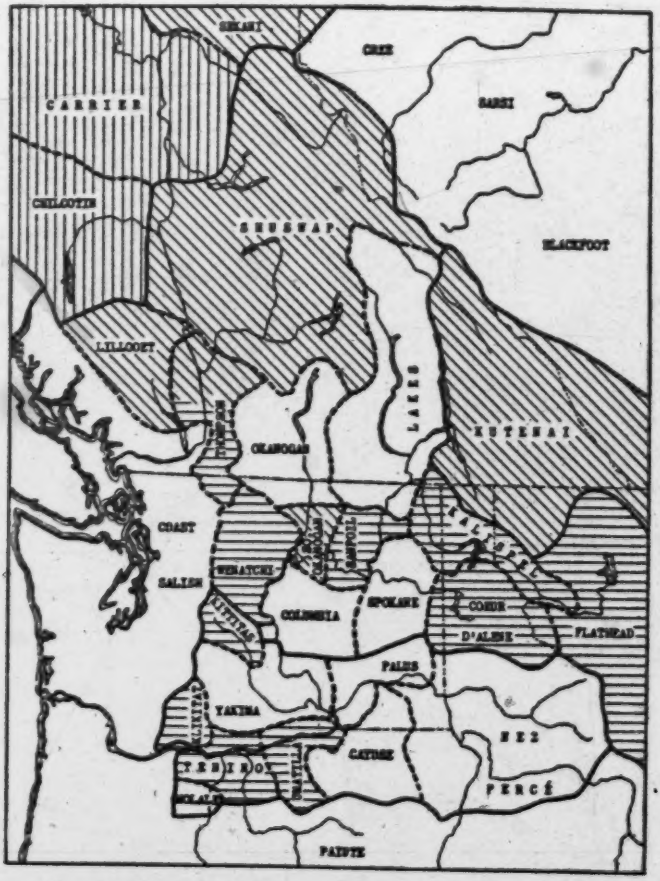

MAP 12. Disease by intrusion. *Vertical hatching:* intrusive object; *diagonal hatching:* spirit causes intrusion of object; *horizontal hatching:* intrusive object, intrusive spirit.

753 non-human in essence; it should not be confused with the human soul.

The *intrusive object* theory is widespread, encompassing the whole of the Plateau, and, of course, a vastly wider area. The more limited distribution of the *intrusive spirit* theory gives it greater significance for

1: Ray E-5 (1928-38) 1939 Plateau

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local relations and history. Its currency has been noted above; it characterizes the American Plateau but is absent to the north. The intrusion of the spirit is commonly, though not invariably, effected by a malignant shaman. Now in the same area there exists the further belief that the intrusion of objects is likewise the work of a shaman in most cases. But this view is not limited to the American Plateau; it is found throughout the area including even the Sekani in the north and possibly the Carrier and Chilcotin. It appears that we are dealing with: (1) an extremely widespread and old concept, intrusive objects, in no way distinguishing the Plateau;[54] (2) the notion of shamanistic ability to influence and control events in the material world by supernatural means, obviously as widespread as is shamanism itself; (3) the association of this talent and the intrusive object theory, again found everywhere in the Plateau, and extending beyond, but not to the degree of the first or second beliefs; (4) the substitution in this complex (3) of the spirit for the object, the spirit being equally subject to control and more effective since it possesses both power and volition. The last is limited to the American Plateau, as indicated above. No great step is involved in the substitution, since, in Plateau practice, the effective agent in object intrusion is always the power of the spirit as directed by the shaman. This identifies spirit intrusion as a typical Plateau trait, a local development probably relatively recent in origin.

The preceding argument runs counter to Clements' reconstructions.[55] It must immediately be noted that the complex which I have called spirit intrusion, for facility of expression, is not the simple element with which Clements is dealing. Even so, the assumptions conflict. "All occurrences [of spirit intrusion] are historically related,"[56] he declares, and nowhere does he suggest a relationship, for any area, between spirit intrusion and object intrusion. Furthermore, his own map and table show no instance of spirit intrusion for any part of the Plateau. Its presence is indicated for Puget Sound and coastal Washington on the basis of Klallam and Lower Chinook data alone. The Klallam information is precise. I have recently been able to substantiate the Lower Chinook case.[57] But Olson does not mention spirit intrusion for

[54] Clements, *Primitive Concepts*, p. 210.

[55] *Idem*, pp. 216–25.

[56] *Idem*, p. 242.

[57] Clements bases his assumptions regarding the Chinook upon the free translation of a brief and equivocal segment of text from Boas (*Chinook Texts*, p. 207): "The spirits of the

1: Ray E-5 (1928-38) 1939 Plateau

753 the Quinault, nor Haeberlin for Puget Sound.[58] The nature of Chinook belief points to diffusion downriver from the Plateau,[59] and it should be added that the isolated Klallam case exactly duplicates Plateau belief.

A second important theory of disease causation held in the Plateau relates to one's own guardian spirit. The dominant form involves loss of the tutelary from one cause or another. These causes fall into three well recognized categories: (1) theft by a malignant shaman; (2) mere wandering away; and (3) desertion because of "mistreatment." The order is that of native emphasis based upon frequency of occurrence. Serious illness is caused by such loss, but proves fatal only after prolonged absence combined with consistent futility of shamanistic efforts to effect return.

In the Canadian Plateau the Lillooet and Lower Thompson appear to be the only groups sharing the guardian spirit loss notion. But to the south it is widespread (Southern Okanogan, Wenatchi, Sanpoil, Kalispel, Coeur d'Alêne, Flathead, Kittitas, Klikitat, Umatilla, Tenino, Wishram[60]) but does not reach the Klamath. Down the Columbia it is found as far as the Lower Chinook. Clearly the American Plateau is the center for this trait, with diffusion occurring to the northwest, and westward along the Columbia.

Intra-areal relations are shown in the incidence of sub-traits. The occurrence of the first, shamanistic theft, is coincidental with that of the general concept. The second, loss by inadvertant wandering, shows a spotty distribution: Lillooet, Kalispel, Wenatchi, Kittitas, Tenino. Deliberate desertion, the third aspect, spreads from northwest to southeast across the central Plateau: Lillooet, Kutenai, Kalispel, Flathead.

Another aspect of personal guardian spirit illness is that associated with the return of one's guardian spirit at maturity or at the time of the winter dance. Among tribes where the guardian spirit is absent from

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seers reach the soul of a sick person. They take it and lift it." The literal translation of the native text reads: "It is reached, his soul, a sick one's. It is taken, it is lifted" (*idem*, p. 198). But Clements quotes, in the same paper, a statement made by Boas at a later time which virtually contradicts Clements' interpretation of the Chinook extract. Boas says: "Belief in obsession is a most characteristic form of belief in the Old World. On the other hand, it seems quite foreign to the beliefs of American tribes. . . . The spirits may *attack* man but they do not *enter* his body" (quoted in Clements, *Primitive Concepts*, p. 188; italics mine).

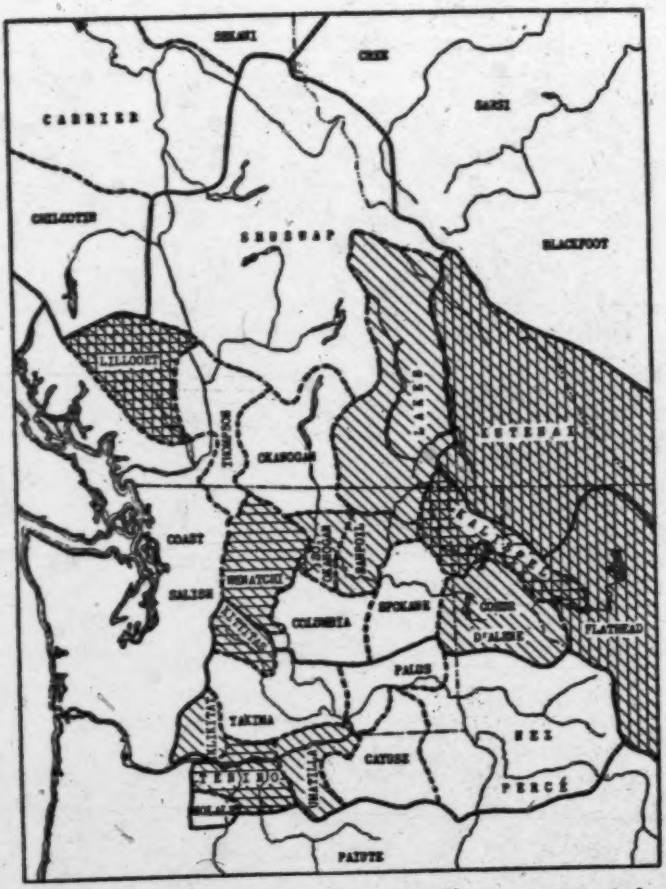
[58] Olson, *Quinault Indians;* Haeberlin and Gunther, *Indians of Puget Sound.*

[59] Ray, *Lower Chinook*, pp. 78 ff.; Ray, *Historical Position*, pp. 370 f.

[60] Spier and Sapir, *Wishram Ethnography*, p. 244.

1: Ray E-5 (1928-38) 1939 Plateau

the time of acquisition until maturity, the return is marked by a physical disturbance varying from a feeling of lonesomeness to a severe illness (see above). Sometimes this illness recurs at the opening of each dance season for several winters. Wherever this occurs an obvious link with



MAP 13. Spirit loss illness. *Diagonal hatching:* shamanistic theft; *horizontal hatching:* desertion due to mistreatment; *vertical hatching:* loss by wandering away.

the Coast is indicated, since there spirits are absent except during the winter season and each annual return is accompanied by physical reactions. The Plateau distribution of personal guardian spirit illness is beautifully illustrative of upriver influence along the Columbia. It oc-

753 curs with the Wishram, Tenino, Klikitat, Umatilla, Kittitas, Wenatchi, Southern Okanogan, and Sanpoil.[61] The specific coastal pattern, illness each winter, does not extend as far upriver as might be anticipated. It is found among the Umatilla, Kittitas, Wenatchi, and probably Wishram.

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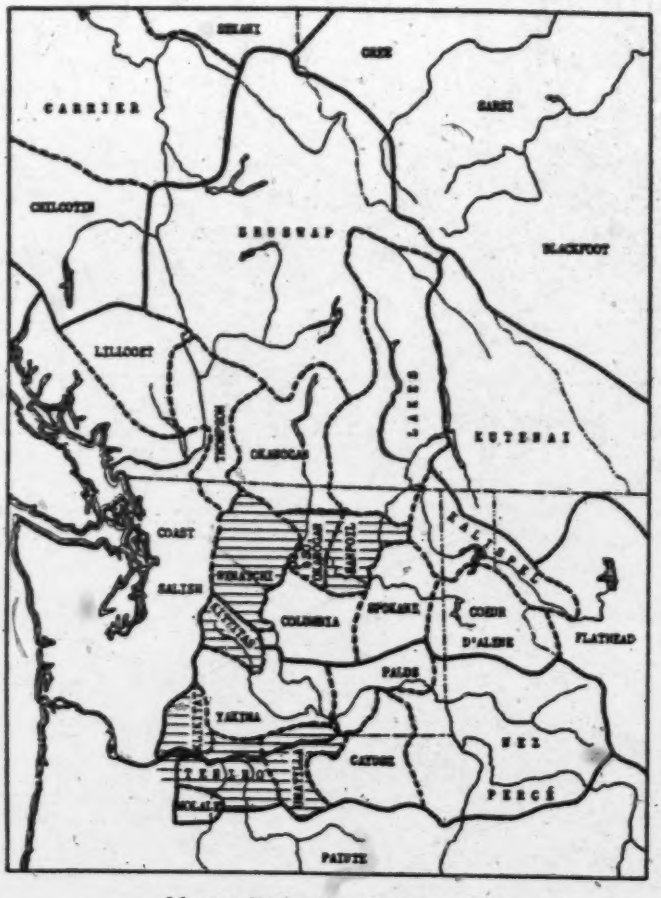


MAP 14. Illness due to spirit return.

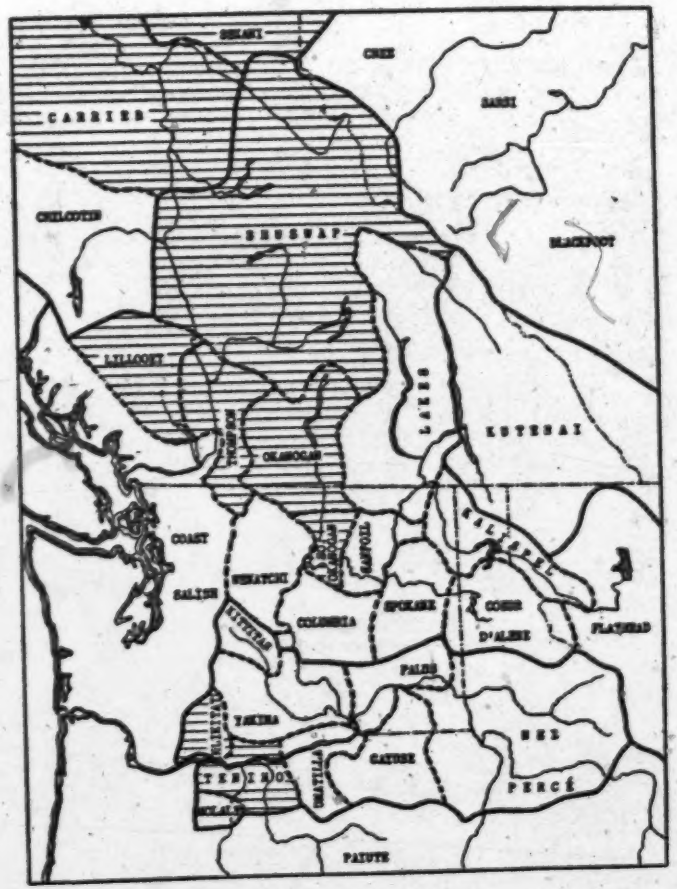
753 There is no evidence of a similar diffusion up the Fraser Valley.

Soul loss is the remaining major disease concept of the Plateau. This is the belief that the animating human soul may become temporarily de-

[61] Spier and Sapir, *Wishram Ethnography*, p. 240; Cline, *Southern Okanogan*, p. 145.

1: Ray E-5 (1928-38) 1939 Plateau

tached from the physical body without death occurring immediately. The accompanying illness is invariably serious—usually the most serious of any ailment—and death comes very soon if the soul is not recovered. Care should be taken not to confuse this concept with guardian



MAP 15. Soul loss.

spirit loss, discussed above. The loose usage of the two terms, spirit and soul, often leads to such confusion, with serious theoretical consequences. Clements falls into this error in his paper on disease concepts.[82] He attributes soul loss to the entire Plateau, which is far from the truth.

[82] Clements, *Primitive Concepts*, pp. 190–201, 225–40.

1: Ray E-5 (1928-38) 1939 Plateau

753 To repeat, the soul is the human animating force; the spirit is the non-human, extrinsic tutelary.

The soul loss disease concept is provocative in distribution and relationships. It is found generally among the Salish of the Canadian Plateau, and also among the Carrier and Sekani.[63] It is known to the Southern Okanogan in rather anomalous form.[64] But the Kutenai lack it, as do all other peoples of the southern area except the Tenino and Klikitat. These cases are easily explained. By their position and isolation their debt to the Coast is indicated. The northern block likewise derived their beliefs from the Coast with little doubt, but via the Fraser Valley. This statement is justified not only by the distribution but by the phrasing of the notion, which is typically coastal. But why, with streams of influence penetrating on both north and south, did the bulk of the American area remain so unequivocally free of it? Because the infiltration was very recent? It appears recent, but I do not believe this is the explanation, or at least the whole explanation. It is hardly mere coincidence that the distributions of soul loss and spirit loss are almost mutually exclusive. Further, where there is overlapping (in the north: Lower Thompson, Lillooet, Kalispel) there is marked confusion of the two ideas. It appears that in the Plateau the well-developed notion of spirit loss inhibited acceptance of the newer concept of soul loss, so closely parallel conceptually. "Why should we accept the distorted interpretations of foreigners; we already had the belief in true form!" This phrasing reflects very closely the reactions of natives to whom I have cautiously pointed out the concept of their coastal neighbors.

THE WINTER SPIRIT DANCE

Essential Characteristics and Inter-areal Relationships

535 776 796 The Winter Guardian Spirit Dance is the major religious ceremony of the Plateau, dwarfing all other rituals by comparison.[65] It forms an elaborate complex which is readily identifiable. It is a simple matter to ascertain its presence or absence for a particular group, so characteristic is the combination of elements. And yet those very elements, in their individual distributions, are highly variable and carry over first into one, and then another, adjacent area. The inter-areal relation-

[63] Jenness, *Sekani Indians*, p. 72.

[64] Cline, *Southern Okanagon*, p. 163.

[65] See Ray, *Sanpoil and Nespelem*, pp. 189–200; cf. Spier, *Klamath Ethnography*, pp. 112–18, 266 f.

5: Bancroft H-4 (no date) 1883 Plateau

771 787 was sent by his father to a high mountain and obliged to remain until he dreamed of some animal, bird, or fish, thereafter to be his medicine, whose claw, tooth, or feather 825 was worn as a charm. The howling of the medicine-wolf and some other beasts forebodes calamity, but by the Okanagans the white-wolf skin is held as an emblem of royalty, and its possession protects the horses of the tribe from evil-minded wolves. A ram's horns left in the trunk of a tree where they were fixed by the misdirected zeal of their owner in attacking a native, were much venerated by the Flatheads, and gave them power over all animals so long as they made frequent offerings 751 at the foot of the tree. The Nez Percés had a peculiar 783 custom of overcoming the *mawish* or spirit of fatigue, and thereby acquiring remarkable powers of endurance. The ceremony is performed annually from the age of eighteen to forty, lasts each time from three to seven days, and consists of thrusting willow sticks down the throat into the stomach, a succession of hot and cold 756 baths, and abstinence from food. Medicine-men acquire or renew their wonderful powers by retiring to the mountains to confer with the wolf. They are then invulnerable; a bullet fired at them flattens on their breast. To allowing their portraits to be taken, or to the operations of strange apparatus they have the same aversion 343 that has been noted on the coast.[190] Steam baths are 515 universally used, not for motives of cleanliness, but some- 783 times for medical purposes, and chiefly in their superstitious ceremonies of purification. The bath-house is a hole dug in the ground from three to eight feet deep, and sometimes fifteen feet in diameter, in some locality where wood and water are at hand, often in the river bank. It is also built above ground of willow branches covered with grass and earth. Only a small hole is left 753 825

[190] 'L'aigle....est le grand oiseau de médecine.' *De Smet, Voy.*, pp. 46, 205; *Wilkes' Nar.*, in *U. S. Ex. Ex.*, vol. iv., pp. 494–5; *Stevens*, in *Ind. Aff. Rept.*, 1854, p. 212, and in *De Smet's West. Miss.*, pp. 285–6; *Suckley*, in *Pac. R. R. Rept.*, vol. i., p. 297; *Hale's Ethnog.*, in *U. S. Ex. Ex.*, vol. vi., p. 208–9; *Ross' Fur Hunters*, vol. i., p. 64, vol. ii., p. 19; *Kane's Wand.*, pp. 267, 280–1, 318.